

REMARKS

Claims 42 – 51 are pending and under consideration in the above-identified application, and Claim 1 – 41 and 52 – 54 were previously cancelled.

In the Office Action, Claims 42 – 51 were rejected.

In this Amendment, Claims 42 and 46 are amended, Claim 49 is cancelled, and Claims 55 – 57 are added. No new matter has been introduced as a result of this Amendment.

Accordingly, Claims 42 – 48, 50 – 51, and 55 – 57 are at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejection of Claims

Claims 42 – 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

This rejection is now moot in view of the cancellation of the limitations at issue in Claim 42.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the claim rejections be withdrawn.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 42- 44 and 48 -51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious *Horwitz et al.* (“*Horwitz*”) (U.S. Patent No. 5,281,631). Although Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, Claim 42 has been amended to clarify the invention and remove any ambiguities that may have been at the basis of this rejection.

Claim 1 is directed to a cleansing method. A cleansing method comprises (a) providing a cleansing processing agent in a solid state which is non-water soluble, (b) contacting the agent with a material to be cleaned, the material to be cleaned containing at least one of a heavy metal, ammonia, and amine compound, and (c) absorbing the at least one of a heavy metal, ammonia, and an amine compound from the material to be cleaned, thereby forming a solid content containing the at least one of a heavy metal, ammonia, and an amine compound. The cleansing processing agent comprises a high molecular material having *20 to 50 mol % of acrylonitrile and 50 to 80 mol % of at least one of styrene and conjugate diene as constituent unit and into which are introduced ionic groups. The ionic groups include carboxylic acid groups and at least one selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acid groups, hydroxy groups, --PO(OH)₂ groups, --CH₂PO(OH)₃ groups, --NO₂ groups or salts thereof.*

That is clearly unlike *Horwitz*. Applicants submit that *Horwitz* fails to teach or suggest that the ionic groups introduced in the high molecular material include carboxylic acid groups and at least one selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acid groups, hydroxy groups, --PO(OH)₂ groups, --CH₂PO(OH)₃ groups, --NO₂ groups or salts thereof, as required by Claim 42.

Thus, Claim 42 is patentable over *Horwitz*, as are dependent Claims 43 - 44 and 48 - 51, for at least the same reasons.

New Claims 55 - 57 are also patentable, for at least the same reasons, in view of their dependence on patentable base Claim 1

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the claim rejections be withdrawn.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 45- 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Horwitz* and *Grant et al.* ("*Grant*") (U.S. Patent No. 5,242,503).

Claims 45- 47 are dependent on Claim 42, shown above to be patentable over *Horwitz*. Moreover, in addition to *Horwitz*, *Grant* also fails to teach or suggest a high molecular material having 20 to 50 mol % of acrylonitrile and 50 to 80 mol % of at least one of styrene and conjugate diene as constituent unit and into which are introduced ionic groups, and the ionic groups include carboxylic acid groups and at least one selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acid groups, hydroxy groups, --PO(OH)₂ groups, --CH₂PO(OH)₃ groups, --NO₂ groups or salts thereof.

Therefore, *Horwitz* and *Grant* may not properly be combined to reject Claim 42. As such, Claim 42 is patentable over *Horwitz* and *Grant*, as are dependent Claims 45 - 47, for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these claim rejections be withdrawn.

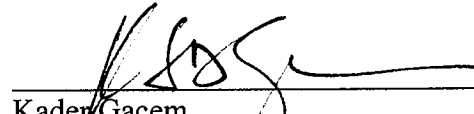
IV. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that Claims 42 – 48, 50 – 51 and 55 – 57 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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